



Security Council

Sixty-third year

*Provisional***6017th** meeting
 Wednesday, 19 November 2008, 3 p.m.
 New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Urbina	(Costa Rica)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Cartuyvels
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Somdah
	China	Mr. Pan Jingyu
	Croatia	Mr. Mutavdžić
	France	Mr. Veyssi�re
	Indonesia	Mr. Kleib
	Italy	Mr. Riccardo
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Arias
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Mr. Paschalis
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Shepherd
	United States of America	Ms. Schedlbauer
	Viet Nam	Mr. Dang Hoang Giang

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Strengthening collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments

Letter dated 10 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/697)

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The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria and Benin, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind all speakers, as was indicated at this morning's session, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Nigeria commends Costa Rica's initiative in organizing this high-level debate on strengthening collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments. We are delighted that His Excellency Mr. Óscar Arias Sánchez, the President of Costa Rica, personally presided this morning over this very important Security Council debate. We are also grateful for the incisive concept paper prepared by the Council presidency and appreciate the illuminating statement of Mr. Sergio Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

The concept of collective security, as contained in the United Nations Charter, was designed not only to deter aggression, but also to offer a sense of security to all nations, regardless of size or resources. However, 62 years later, both the promise and hope for collective security have not been fully realized. While States have espoused support for collective security, they have in

the same vein demonstrated considerable reluctance to pursue common global security policies. Consequently, we have continuously encountered scourges of civil strife, inter-State and intra-State conflicts, particularly on the African continent. A common characteristic of these conflicts is the tangled nexus between conflicts and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In spite of these daunting challenges, the Nigerian delegation is persuaded that the United Nations remains the best platform for collective security. Our inextricable interdependence makes it imperative for States to act in concert to ensure that international peace is preserved. We recognize, however, that the collective security system to which we all aspire must realistically take into account new threats and challenges. Transboundary threats, such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, genocide, human rights violations, terrorism, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and, indeed, activities of international criminal syndicates, defy geographical boundaries. They are dispersed, insidious and diffused, and require collective action to tackle them.

Nigeria believes that a successful collective security system must rest on committed and genuine partnership between nation States and Member States. It is only through such a commitment that we can translate the dividends of collective security into a tangible tool of conflict prevention. Indeed, Nigeria believes that we can enhance collective security through an effective armaments regulation policy.

On the African continent, illicit trade and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons continue to fuel new conflicts and render the old ones intractable. It is also strengthening non-State actors and reinforcing criminal networks. Hence, we consider small arms and light weapons to be the biggest threat to the consolidation of peace and development. Indeed, their lethality and ready deployment make small arms and light weapons Africa's weapons of mass destruction. In some conflict zones in Africa, particularly in the West African subregion, guns are more readily accessible than food. Such a numbing reality must compel us to be unflinching in our concerted efforts to restore peace and security in war-torn sections of Africa.

Indeed, it was this situation that propelled the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) into establishing a moratorium in October

1998 on the import, export and manufacture of small arms and light weapons. Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We note with regret, however, that despite efforts at various levels, the illicit circulation of small arms has continued, and their devastating effects on African States in particular seem to negate the political will that we all exhibited at the time of the Programme's adoption in 2001.

Nigeria is convinced that the most effective strategy for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit small arms trade is through the elaboration of a legally binding global instrument and the collective political will to stem the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms. We therefore call on Member States to demonstrate the necessary political will to establish international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. We unequivocally support a legally binding arms trade treaty, not only as a tool for establishing a common, international standard on the global arms trade, but also as a means of regulating the accessibility of illicit small arms and light weapons to non-State actors.

Beyond regulating small arms and light weapons proliferation, Nigeria believes that an effective United Nations collective security system requires the strengthening of regional security mechanisms, in consonance with Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, which encourages regional organizations to deal with conflicts in their regions. The African Union's evolving Peace and Security Architecture and other subregional security initiatives, including the ECOWAS conflict resolution Mechanism, are designed to rid the continent of conflicts and their debilitating consequences.

We therefore join the quest for a new culture of conflict prevention since it is evident that, in practice, it costs less to prevent than to control conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Ms. Espinosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by saying that Ecuador felt very honoured by the presence of the President of Costa Rica, who led the Council's discussion this morning. We would also like to welcome His Excellency

Mr. Samuel Lewis-Navarro, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama.

My delegation would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for the excellent initiative of organizing an open debate on such an important topic for our States, and we believe that this is a very crucial step for the establishment of true interaction, a real dialogue, between the Security Council and all the States Members of the Organization. My delegation is convinced that the fight of the international community to strengthen collective security must deal with the underlying causes as well as the origin of the vast majority of conflicts, these being extreme poverty and the unequal distribution of resources, employment and power.

Police, military nor intelligence measures are not enough to eradicate these serious problems. What we need is to introduce a radical change in the structures of the current international order. In recent times, we have witnessed various areas of insecurity and violence around the world. Given this state of affairs, there has been criticism by public opinion against what they have observed as the inability of the United Nations to prevent conflicts, to restore peace and to prevent the loss of innocent civilian lives.

Nevertheless, the United Nations is what its members make of it. This global Organization is not a super-State with coercive prerogatives over its members. This is why we can only reiterate the crucial responsibility that the Security Council has, in accordance with Article 24 of the Charter, as well as the Council's necessary interaction with the General Assembly, in accordance with Article 26 of the same instrument.

My delegation believes it essential that the Security Council establish a relationship with the General Assembly, which is the most democratic and representative organ, in order to strengthen the multilateral system as the sole effective way to establish peace and build development.

Ecuador, resolute in its commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, not only has joined the various international instruments adopted in this area, but also supports and implements all the actions that emanate from those instruments, in order to achieve their real implementation.

Given the transnational effects of drug trafficking, the illicit arms trafficking, organized crime and terrorism, Ecuador is part of regional and international organizations and conventions to combat these scourges. In the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, Ecuador actively participates in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance.

The challenge of small arms and light weapons is above all due to the uncontrolled proliferation of the trade in these weapons. The ease of acquiring them has been a decisive factor in the increase in domestic and international conflicts and the escalation in violence and social disintegration that threatens many countries, in particular the most vulnerable sectors of civilian populations, especially women and children.

Along the same lines, my delegation would like to reiterate its willingness to continue work on developing an arms trade treaty that would make it possible to strengthen the commitment of all countries with respect to international peace and security. Likewise, my country has recently hosted a regional meeting on cluster munitions. In this respect, we have stressed the importance of ratifying that international instrument.

A decade has passed since Ecuador and Peru signed the Brasilia peace agreements, through which the border area was transformed from a conflict zone into an area of peace, work and cooperation. The humanitarian mine-clearance programme became a successful mechanism to strengthen mutual trust and security between our countries. Similarly, given the impact of the domestic Colombian conflict on Ecuadorian society, the efforts of Plan Ecuador are based on a preventive, multidimensional and multisectoral approach. The implementation of that approach is based on achieving national social and economic development goals, strict compliance with international commitments on human rights, the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and the fight against any type of illicit activity that would affect civil security.

For Ecuador, the topic of collective security is fundamental, and we see it above all as a State policy that guarantees the right to well-being and dignity for human beings, the promotion of collective interests over private interests, intercultural exchange, social

inclusion and the fight against all forms of discrimination.

That is why we think it is paradoxical that, although some countries, such as Ecuador, are deeply committed to disarmament as an instrument of development, in many other cases there has been no abatement in military spending by other States. In the current context of the energy, food and climate crises, we must have a serious discussion on the priorities of our public spending and our investments. Once the cold war was over, we believed — too optimistically — that we had achieved the conditions necessary to restore peace and security through confidence-building measures. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter is therefore the only means for some States to safeguard their security when the Security Council fails to take timely, effective and impartial action to restore peace and security in the world.

We live in a global and interconnected world, and as a result, threats to peace and security require that we strengthen multilateralism, as the President of Costa Rica rightly pointed out this morning. For this reason, my delegation sincerely hopes that the ideas expressed in this debate will be followed up appropriately and translated into concrete action, accompanied by continuous reflection and review and contributing to the greater effectiveness, transparency and legitimacy of this very important body.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): The Australian Government is committed to strengthening international peace and security. Multilateral organizations, and in particular the United Nations and its Security Council, play a vital role in this regard. We welcome the Costa Rican initiative to sponsor this open debate of the Council on collective security and armament regulation, an important element of the Security Council's work.

Given the time constraints, I want to focus this afternoon on the armaments regulation issue. We have made progress in that regard over the past 60 years. We have seen significant achievements, including the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), conventions on biological and chemical weapons, five protocols to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the universalization of the Geneva Conventions and the

emergence of a number of regional security agreements. However, more must be done.

The international community now stands at a crossroads. We cannot accept anything other than a successful outcome from the 2010 NPT Review Conference, not only in order to ensure progress on the non-proliferation — both horizontal and vertical — of weapons of mass destruction, but for regional and global security more broadly. The Review Conference offers us an opportunity to re-energize the non-proliferation and disarmament regimes for the greater security of all. That opportunity cannot be lost.

As members of the Council will be aware, Australia and Japan have joined together to establish the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. The Commission promises a fresh and imaginative vision. It is aimed at helping to change the formulaic and unproductive nature of much of the current nuclear debate. The Commission seeks to help shape a global consensus in the lead-up to 2010 and beyond. Commissioners from a broad range of countries, including members of this Council, will work towards that goal. We encourage all States to support the work of the Commission and to draw on the formidable expertise of its membership in our cooperative efforts on non-proliferation, peaceful use and nuclear disarmament.

We cannot discuss progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation without acknowledging the need for conventional armament regulation. Australia hopes that the encouraging steps we have seen in the area of conventional weapons in recent years can continue. While we see many potential opportunities for further global action, we particularly urge States to continue the momentum, recently demonstrated by the resounding majority of member States in this year's First Committee, to work towards an arms trade treaty.

A legally binding, multilateral arms trade treaty would bring much-needed transparency and accountability, codify existing best practice in the responsible transfer of conventional weapons, and prevent human rights abuses and the destabilizing accumulation of arms.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland welcomes your initiative, Mr. President, to organize this high-level meeting. I would like to thank you for the concept paper that was distributed in order to prepare for this thematic debate. We agree with the statement that the concrete situations with which the Security Council is today confronted in many crises underline the need for it to review its role and to reflect on the best way of implementing Article 26 of the Charter. I would like to briefly raise five points.

First, my country considers it essential that the main organs of the United Nations respect their specific areas of competence. The legislative role that requires the greatest possible transparency is clearly that of the General Assembly. The Swiss positions on the main disarmament and non-proliferation issues relating to conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction are well known and I will not repeat them here. The Security Council, for its part, focuses its attention more on specific conflicts, intervening in the event of a crisis. It is therefore its duty to consider new security policy challenges and to make use of the lessons learned.

Secondly, Switzerland believes that specific projects and concrete programmes, the supervision of illicit arms trafficking in the context of peacekeeping operations, the monitoring of regional agreements and fact-finding missions on the illicit trafficking of arms can be crucial tools in reinforcing the close link between disarmament, development and peace. On the basis of these experiences, we believe it useful for the Security Council to present proposals to parties to conflicts and to make disarmament a key subject in peace negotiations.

Thirdly, allow me to mention the linkage between socio-economic development and armed violence. Launched in 2006, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development is based on the premise that armed violence is a serious obstacle to development and may impede the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Conversely, armed violence can be reduced by the effects of economic and social development. The importance of the Geneva Declaration was recognized in the report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2008/258), issued in April at the request of the Security Council.

In the framework of the implementation of the Geneva Declaration, a number of voluntary pilot

countries were identified with a view to drawing up and implementing policies and programmes to reduce armed violence. My country suggests that the Security Council should use a similar methodology. The innovative aspect of this approach is that it takes a comprehensive view of armed violence and thus considers violence generated in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as in cases of terrorism and of crime. Indeed, if we examine the list of conflicts of which the Council is seized, we are often confronted with layers of different forms of violence that call for a determined and more systematic action by the Security Council. In this respect, Burundi and Haiti, to take only two examples, illustrate the complex relations that exist between armed violence and economic development. The projects initiated in these two countries in the framework of the Geneva Declaration could also give impetus to United Nations action in the area of peacekeeping.

Fourthly, Switzerland would also like to note that reduction and regulation of armaments are not the only way forward in this area. Security sector reform and the demobilization, demilitarization and reintegration of former combatants can also contribute to this effort and reduce tension. The links between the two themes, which have been discussed by the Security Council, and their practical implementation need to be looked at as a whole.

Fifthly, and finally, I would like to emphasize that my country endorses the basic idea in the concept paper, which stresses the importance of regional arms control and disarmament measures. However, Switzerland also believes that it is essential to bear in mind the specific nature of each region in exercises of this kind and to create a sense of ownership by the main actors.

The President (spoke in Spanish): I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): I would like to begin by joining previous speakers in thanking the Republic of Costa Rica and its President, Mr. Óscar Arias Sánchez, for having organized this open debate on maintenance of international peace and security: strengthening collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments. We certainly believe that this is a timely initiative because of the fact that many of the issues under discussion are very topical.

Allow me to recall the clear and committed policy of Argentina with respect to disarmament and non-proliferation, which aims at achieving a multilateral consensus to secure international peace and security.

The concept paper presented by Costa Rica for this meeting (S/2008/697, annex) properly stresses Articles 24 and 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular with respect to the Military Staff Committee, which should have assisted the Security Council in the formulation of plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments. However, for the use and command of the forces placed at the disposal of the United Nations, the Organization had to establish different arrangements throughout its history to overcome the impossibility that the Military Staff Committee could fulfil its mandate. The current structure of United Nations peacekeeping operations arose from the need to perform some of those functions foreseen in the Charter.

With respect to disarmament and the regulation of armaments, the usual United Nations bodies, as well as the Conference on Disarmament and many other arrangements, provide forums to discuss and negotiate these issues. Unfortunately, it has been difficult to achieve meaningful results in recent years, mainly because of the opposing interests of various countries. To think that it is possible to revitalize a Military Staff Committee whose functions it has never been possible to activate and to enable it to address disarmament and arms regulation of armaments does not seem to be a realistic way to achieve the desired objective.

The responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security is mainly executive in nature. Debates in the Council on issues that are not on its agenda, even when they are open meetings, should not make us lose sight of the fact that this cannot replace the consideration of these issues by the General Assembly, which is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations. Even with the division of labour between the Council and the General Assembly set out in the Charter, the possibility of including disarmament issues in the Council's agenda cannot restrict possible action by the General Assembly in this regard.

Argentina has traditionally adopted a comprehensive approach towards the development of actions and initiatives in the field of disarmament and the regulation of armaments. We reiterate our long-standing position in favour of the role of multilateralism — and the United Nations in particular — in addressing the challenges posed by disarmament and non-proliferation.

With that in mind, Argentina would like to reaffirm its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and other fundamental multilateral instruments. The Security Council should continue to play an important role in support of non-proliferation regimes for weapons of mass destruction in the context of its mandate in the maintenance of international peace and security. International cooperation in the area of non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their means of delivery and related materials, is extremely important for the achievement of the Security Council's objectives, namely, the fight against the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and by international terrorism.

Furthermore, we believe that specific actions in the field of non-proliferation should be accompanied with a clear and specific commitment, reflected in an agenda for action in the field of disarmament by all the members of the international community.

Lastly, allow me to recall the special priority and attention that my country gives to progress in the area of conventional weapons. We have provided our strong and active support to the development of transparency and confidence-building measures, both in our region and internationally. In this context, we hope that, following the success of initiatives like the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, we can now take the next step towards the codification of the arms trade so as to provide the United Nations with tools to prevent flows of weapons that are excessive or destabilizing or that ignore the standards set by the Security Council. We therefore hope that we can make fruitful progress in that direction.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on presiding over the Security Council this month, as well as to thank you for having convened this open debate. That initiative is consistent with the long and courageous efforts of President Óscar Arias to support disarmament and peace, which we sincerely appreciate.

We are also grateful for the clear concept paper that your delegation has circulated among all delegations. The topic identified by you and your colleagues for this meeting can be addressed in many different ways. What makes the most sense to the vast majority of the countries of the world is the fact that spending on armaments and disproportionately sized military forces constitutes a poor allocation of resources. That is especially so given that the main threats facing humankind today are of equal to, or even greater than, those of armed aggression and terrorism. They include, first, hunger, poverty and social exclusion; secondly, environmental challenges, including global warming; and, thirdly, organized crime.

Your own country, Mr. President, is an example of the positive effects of diverting public resources from maintaining armed forces to social expenditures. That has produced notable tangible results, given Costa Rica's health and education indicators as compared to those of the rest of Central America.

Another element of this issue pertains to the institutional aspects of disarmament, in particular when it comes to determining who does what. For example, there is no clear dividing line within the United Nations between the functions of the General Assembly and those of the Security Council, nor between the work of the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva and the bodies based in New York, including the Disarmament Commission. Nor is there a neat dividing line between the functions of the United Nations and those of regional institutions, although we believe that the concept paper that Costa Rica has prepared for us is correct in placing strong emphasis on the cooperative relationship between the United Nations and regional disarmament bodies.

Another issue worth mentioning is the great value of conflict prevention efforts. Among other things, such efforts contribute to establishing an environment where States feel less inclined to undertake armed aggression. Such an environment is also conducive to

the pursuit of positive steps through reciprocal unilateral measures that are conducive to averting competition for military supremacy among States.

From the vantage point of my own country, our priority is to reduce and control small arms and light weapons and to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing, transfer, circulation and proliferation of those weapons. That priority gave rise to one of the many commitments contained in our peace accords of 1996, which we are attempting to implement through the adoption of a new arms and munitions law currently being debated in Guatemala's Congress.

We are also participating actively in the Central American Programme on Small Arms Control. The exchange of information on issues relating to control and tracing is one of the areas in which that regional programme is active. Guatemala therefore supports the early adoption of a legally binding instrument to establish common international standards on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. Such a treaty should be transparent, non-discriminatory and negotiated at the multilateral level.

It is for all those reasons that we agree with the Government of Costa Rica that disarmament should have a prominent place on humankind's thematic agenda, as well as on that of the United Nations. My delegation believes that the efforts of the international community to address the problem of disarmament — in particular that of small arms — and the attention that the General Assembly has given to the issue will be significantly strengthened by the adoption of the draft presidential statement before the Security Council today. We are confident that it will provide further political impetus to efforts to implement the 2001 Programme of Action. It will also ensure that the United Nations continues to play a central role in the multilateral effort to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation appreciates the opportunity to participate in this open debate of the Security Council. I should like to congratulate Costa Rica and President Óscar Arias for this excellent initiative intended to launch a joint examination of the need to strengthen multilateral mechanisms for collective security and

adapt them to the new challenges facing today's world. In that regard, I should like to fully endorse the statement delivered this morning by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union.

The international community should be prepared to respond effectively to new and complex challenges in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. To that end, there is a need for renewed determination to establish effective multilateralism through which the United Nations, as the guarantor of international legality, can act as the essential instrument in facilitating cooperation that can allow us all to make progress in three inextricably linked priority areas, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, economic and social development and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The Charter of the United Nations confers various responsibilities on the Security Council and the General Assembly in the area of maintaining international peace and security. It also calls for appropriate interaction between those two primary organs as regards goals pursued by the Organization as a whole. We should welcome today's initiative by Costa Rica, which serves to frame the debate and calls on the Security Council, in close cooperation with other international and regional organizations, to support efforts to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security. That could serve to open the way for a reduction in armaments and troops, thereby freeing up human and material resources for the achievement of economic and social development.

There is no doubt that the world must move forward in that direction and thereby avoid human and economic costs that weigh on the whole of humankind. As President Arias clearly noted this morning, that would make the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 more feasible.

For Spain, as a member of the European Union, promoting and maintaining peace are hallmarks of our foreign policy and that is why we participate in many global and regional initiatives, in favour of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control. In the context of the United Nations, Spain supports the work of the Security Council, participating in peacekeeping and conflict-prevention operations and strictly complying with its decisions and recommendations. Similarly, Spain participates

actively in the work of the General Assembly and supports many initiatives in the areas of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament and conventional weapons control. Spain has also subscribed to the universal conventions in this area. We take part in the principal negotiating forums and support the institutions and mechanisms that promote those objectives.

In the current international context, Governments and civil society must promote international and regional initiatives to counter the insecurity and armed violence in various parts of the world that seriously limit the development capacity of the most disadvantaged regions. A notable example is the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development of 2006, in which Spain participated alongside a broad group of countries and whose objective is to promote sustainable security and a culture of peace and to act to reduce armed violence and its adverse impact on socio-economic and human development.

Another specific example is the financial and technical support given by the Spanish Government to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which works to promote understanding and cooperation among States of the region in these areas of activity.

Along the same lines, Spain has been working actively on the implementation of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as other initiatives — for example, on anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions — that have a great impact in the humanitarian sphere and in general on the political stability and economic development of countries and the everyday lives of people.

Similarly, the Spanish Government has promoted the development of new international instruments and, in particular, a draft arms trade treaty of a legally binding nature that would establish universal criteria to regulate the world trade in conventional weapons. That is the spirit that inspired the Master Plan for Spanish Cooperation, the peacebuilding strategy of Spain's development cooperation and its sectoral plans, which include the three interconnected dimensions of security and defence, socio-economic development and political

development. The implementation of that cooperation policy has allowed Spain to become an important donor, in terms of both technical and financial assistance, in areas such as humanitarian de-mining, the removal of explosive remnants of war and the fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, with particular attention to assisting victims, their families and the communities to which they belong. All of these actions are part of a genuine effort to move forward in the area of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control and to achieve results that benefit millions of people throughout the world.

The international community must respond urgently and decisively to the new challenges heralded by the twenty-first century. It is the duty of all Member States to support the work of the United Nations by assuming the leadership necessary to bring us closer to a renewed system of collective security that is based on trust and equipped with a comprehensive approach through gradual steps in all the areas we have discussed. The objective is to build a stable peace based on respect for human rights, the promotion of good governance and sustainable development. As the initiative launched today by Costa Rica demonstrates, this task is in our hands and it is a moral duty of all, for the sake of future generations.

The President (spoke in Spanish): I call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation appreciates the holding of this debate. We hope that it will enhance understanding of various issues related to collective security and armament regulation.

We have always stressed the imperative of evolving a new consensus on the whole range of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues. This new consensus should be based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, with full recognition of the role of the United Nations, reflecting the security interests of all States and guided by the principle of equal security for all.

The architecture of a global consensus on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation should rest on a solid foundation comprising the following elements.

There must be a renewed commitment on the part of all States to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Transparency,

verifiability and irreversibility should be the fundamental principles applied to all disarmament measures. Pending general and complete nuclear disarmament, there should be a universal, non-discriminatory and legally binding instruments on negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States.

There must be international agreement on universal and non-discriminatory criteria for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including nuclear power generation. Policies of selectively granting or denying access to civilian nuclear technology in disregard of any generally applicable criteria detract from the credibility and legitimacy of the non-proliferation regime.

Commitment is needed to evolving a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of missiles and anti-ballistic missile systems, which are inherently destabilizing. The need for strengthening the international legal regime to prevent the militarization of outer space must be recognized.

In parallel with negotiations on nuclear disarmament, there is an urgent need for negotiations on the balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. As laid out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, these negotiations should be conducted with a particular emphasis on militarily significant States. The disturbing trend of escalation in the number and sophistication of conventional weapons has to be arrested, as it has a causal relationship with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons.

Cooperation in matters having strategic implications for a region should be pursued in such a manner as to ensure the right of each State to undiminished security, guaranteeing that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantage over others. Armament regulations should not only be aimed at transfer controls, but should also take into account existing asymmetries and military imbalances and stockpiles, as well as production and manufacturing.

Nevertheless, armament regulations alone cannot facilitate the objective of international peace and security unless pursued in parallel with efforts towards

the peaceful settlement of disputes and to remove underlying security concerns of States.

Regional tensions contribute to the arms race, not only endangering international peace and security, but also undermining efforts aimed at arms control and disarmament. Conflict resolution and the maintenance of strategic and conventional stability at the regional and global levels should therefore be at the core of efforts to strengthen international peace and security.

The principle of equal security for all necessitates open consultations and dialogue among States without preconditions. The best venue to pursue such consultations and negotiations is the General Assembly, in which all Member States are represented.

Entrusting the responsibility for collective security to the Security Council and the tendency of the Security Council to legislate on behalf of Member States on matters of armaments control are bound to raise security concerns among the overwhelming majority of developing countries that are not represented in the Council.

The existing export control arrangements, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), are exclusive. The restricted nature of certain export control arrangements is an impediment to the global implementation of non-proliferation standards. If States are required to meet the standards set by those arrangements, they should be given the opportunity to participate in them and benefit by sharing the best practices and experiences of the founding members of those arrangements in the area of export controls. That would also enable States to keep abreast of technical advancements.

Moreover, members of those exclusive arrangements have been creating discriminatory exceptions to their own rules, thus undermining the objective of international stability. Non criteria-based civil nuclear cooperation based on commercial consideration does nothing to promote international non-proliferation objectives. Similarly, the MTCR is undermined by international cooperation in the development of anti-ballistic missiles, which involves cooperation in dual-use technologies, such as solid fuel propulsion systems, missile targeting and guidance systems, and other systems that can be used to develop offensive weaponry and missiles.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the need to evolve multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory and universal regulations on armaments.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on your work as President of the Security Council for the month of November. My delegation appreciates the convening of this debate on strengthening collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments. The presence of Nobel Peace laureate President Óscar Arias Sánchez and his authoritative statement this morning add special pertinence and significance to the proposed discussion.

For Colombia, the close link that exists between security and development is clear. The democratic security policy implemented by the Government of President Alvaro Uribe is based on offering equal protection to all citizens and on creating the conditions in which they can enjoy their rights and liberties. That policy has produced a virtuous cycle in which the strengthening of the rule of law creates conditions for the promotion of development and economic prosperity, which in turn contributes to stronger civic participation and democracy.

While it has borne fruit, the democratic security policy has demanded great efforts, including military spending, which has been adapted to the challenges required to achieve the projected goals. During that process, Colombia has had a clear standpoint — we conceive military spending fundamentally as a vital investment in protecting our citizens' lives and well-being.

My country shares the concerns over the need to reallocate funds for military spending to development programmes without detriment to the security and defence needs of States, bearing in mind the specific needs of each. In that regard, we uphold our commitment to disarmament, development and the implementation of the General Assembly's resolutions on that issue.

Colombia's participation as a United Nations Member State is guided by the irrevocable commitment to multilateralism and the rule of law. We share the principles and values enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We highlight the visionary nature of Article

26, which provides for the competence of the Security Council to formulate plans to establish a system for the regulation of armaments. The goal of promoting the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security, with the least diversion for armaments of human and economic resources remains fully valid.

Moreover, Colombia believes that any new initiative concerning the control and regulation of armaments must be discussed and agreed within the United Nations General Assembly. A successful outcome in that area can be achieved only with the commitment of all States Members of the Organization.

Today, the issue of security has a multidimensional reach. In the contemporary world, there are factors that transcend the traditional threats to security. In that regard, we concur with the position set out in the concept paper circulated by Costa Rica (S/2008/697) with regard to the important role that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations plays in preserving collective security.

In that regard, I would like to highlight the work and orientation of the Organization of American States (OAS) in building reciprocal confidence measures among the countries of our region. That has occurred through many initiatives, including, among others, promoting transparency, such as the publication of defence books on national policies in that area.

In addition, the OAS promotes the eradication of anti-personnel mines and monitors observance of commitments under the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. By virtue of those treaties, the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area was established in Latin America and the Caribbean. The OAS also promotes cooperation in our region through multilateral peace efforts and the joint fight against international terrorism.

The uncontrolled spread and inappropriate use of small arms and light weapons cause great harm, both in terms of human lives and in their negative impact on security and development conditions. The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects monopolizes significant resources that could be invested in development. Advancing the establishment of effective controls to stop that illicit trade must therefore be a priority for the international community.

Colombia attaches great importance to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It is a fundamental global instrument and a reference point for the adoption of measures to combat that phenomenon.

Colombia considers it necessary to continue working in this area within the multilateral framework and advancing towards the adoption of new commitments and the implementation of those already in place with the aim of concluding legally binding instruments in the field. The broad participation of States in the implementation of the Programme of Action is an essential requirement for that endeavour.

My delegation actively participates at all levels in initiatives that contribute to coordinated and effective action against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. More concrete progress in that area would be a fundamental contribution to collective security.

The strengthening of collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments, as well as other initiatives proposed to that end, merit careful consideration by the United Nations and its principal organs.

The changes that have taken place in the world since the 1990s have generated conditions for a new consensus in the area of security. It is therefore necessary, from that perspective, to step up our efforts and will for joint action as the only way to save future generations from the scourges that threaten peace, security and development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Migliore (Holy See) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Sir, for inviting my delegation to take part in this important debate.

(*spoke in English*)

My delegation expresses its appreciation for the convening of this open debate with the goal of addressing the necessity of general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces with a view towards strengthening international peace and security.

The dramatic consequences of the illicit global arms trade call the international community to redouble its commitment to create new control mechanisms.

With the recent adoption of a draft resolution entitled "Towards an arms trade treaty" in the First Committee of the General Assembly, which lays down the first important step towards a legally binding instrument on arms trade and transfers, this debate is not only timely but vital to reinvigorating efforts in global arms reduction. The Holy See fully supports and encourages such an undertaking in this body and by the entire international community, and stands ready to make its contribution.

The initiative of the Security Council to address the issue of the regulation and reduction of armaments is interlinked with the continued worldwide problems of security and is gaining momentum around the world. Recently, during the general debate within the First Committee of the General Assembly, we heard a delegate from Africa say that for every African, there are seven illicit bullets and three guns targeted at him or her. This is scandalous, especially at a time when an unacceptably high ratio of the world's population still lives below the poverty line.

That is but one example among many. My delegation shares the grave concern of conflict-ridden countries, whose experience tells us that the illicit trade in arms and their accumulation and illicit production are a hindrance to the peaceful settlement of disputes, turn tensions into armed conflicts and are a key factor in prolonging them, thus heavily compromising peace and development.

The lack of regulation and commitment to reducing global arms supplies has created a world in which weapons are more easily obtainable than food, shelter and education. Clearly, by dedicating even a portion of the \$1.3 trillion spent on arms to programmes designed to promote the full social, economic and spiritual growth of people, we will not only be creating a better and safer world, but also promoting new respect for life and one another.

In that context, my delegation wishes to echo the voices of hundreds of thousands in the Democratic Republic of the Congo crying out for justice, peace, security and the ability to simply live in dignity on their own soil. The Holy See strongly condemns the massacres being committed under the eyes of the international community in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and calls for all efforts to stop that human tragedy.

The entry into force on 5 May 2006 of the Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa marked an important step towards establishing universal standards for protecting civilian populations in the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa and bordering States. We realize that the very States where massacres take place these days have signed and ratified the Nairobi Protocol. The Holy See urges all of them to expedite its implementation.

In conclusion, my delegation fully agrees that there is a need to develop a new security consensus that will assist in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, security and respect for human rights. Greater efforts, political will, transparency, flexibility and openness are needed. My delegation shares the view that, in launching such a process, the first and most important step is to ensure that States abide by the treaties they have signed and ratified and maintain collectively agreed levels of military spending.

The President (spoke in Spanish): I give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): Let me begin by thanking you, Sir, for this highly significant initiative. We have often said that arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation need more political attention. In view of rising arms expenditures worldwide, concerns about national nuclear programmes and little progress in the international disarmament forums, we must use every opportunity to discuss those pressing issues. Today's event demonstrates that the world's pre-eminent security forum, the Security Council, gives full attention to all aspects of disarmament, peace and development.

Last month, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlined five points for progress in the field of arms control and called for a fresh start not just for disarmament, but for strengthening our system of international peace and security. The debate today and the concept paper presented by Costa Rica (S/2008/697) are part of such a fresh start.

I would like to raise two issues of importance to the Austrian Government. The first concerns the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). By their very nature, nuclear tests are a deliberate threat to peace and security. Twenty years after the end of the

cold war, the language of threats should no longer be used today.

The entry into force of the CTBT is long overdue. As a co-Chair of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT — an honour we share with our partner Costa Rica — Austria is actively working for the early entry force of the CTBT by sponsoring CTBT conferences and workshops in different parts of the world. Since 2007 we have witnessed growing momentum towards the universalization of the CTBT, as demonstrated by the recent ratifications by the Bahamas, Barbados, Colombia, Malaysia and Mozambique, as well as by the signatures of Iraq and Timor-Leste.

The CTBT Ministerial Meeting of 24 September 2008 in New York demonstrated the widespread interest in bringing the Treaty into force. I would like to take this opportunity to call on all States that have not yet ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible.

A second issue of concern to my Government is conventional arms and, in particular, an arms trade treaty. Success stories at the intersection of disarmament, humanitarian law and the rule of law, such as the Ottawa Convention on Landmines, have been inspiring examples of the fact that legal arms control and disarmament not only are an aspiration, but also can become a reality with the necessary political will.

A very recent example is the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was agreed in May and will be opened for signature at the Signing Conference in Oslo on 3 December. As one of the States that have actively campaigned for the treaty, Austria hopes that many States will come to Oslo and be part of the process of banning a weapon that has proved to have terrible consequences for civilians.

Such success stories give us hope. With more than 1,000 people dying daily from firearms, regulation of the trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, should be a matter of the highest priority for all United Nations Member States. Irresponsible arms transfers foment violent conflicts, perpetuate poverty and underdevelopment, and contribute to violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

Thirteen years ago, Mr. Óscar Arias Sánchez, President of Costa Rica, called upon a group of fellow

Nobel Peace laureates to promote an international campaign for the establishment of an agreement to control arms transfers, drafting the Nobel Peace Laureates' International Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers. From the very beginning, Austria has fully supported the process towards an arms trade treaty and hopes that the Open-ended Working Group will succeed in creating the basis for a robust and legally binding instrument in 2009.

The multilateral regulation of the nuclear fuel cycle could be another way to increase confidence and mutual trust among States, thereby creating an environment more conducive to arms control and nuclear disarmament. Austria believes that it is time to design a framework suited to the nuclear realities of this century — a framework that places the most dangerous technologies, enrichment and reprocessing, under the multilateral control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Accompanied by fair and equitable rules of transparency and access, those States that have opted for nuclear energy could have access to all the nuclear fuel they need under the control of the Agency, which would be responsible for ensuring safety and security. The creation of an IAEA fuel bank, currently under discussion, could be a first step in that direction.

In conclusion, Austria wishes in particular to place on record its full support for multilateralism and the rule of law, existing international treaties and conventions, and initiatives for new global security treaties.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Chabar (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset, on behalf of my delegation, to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this important debate on an issue that remains a major concern of the international community. We also wish to thank Ambassador Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his important briefing this morning.

Collective security is the basic concept that guided the founders of the United Nations when they created the Organization. Accordingly, it represents the major objective towards which all United Nations activities are directed.

It has been only three years since the 2005 World Summit, at which the Secretary-General issued his report, largely inspired by the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, which he himself had established in 2003 to take an in-depth look at ways to adapt the United Nations system to the needs of the twenty-first century and to predict new threats to collective security.

Since then, it has been agreed that such threats, which undermine collective security, also include intra- and inter-State conflicts, terrorism, organized crime, weapons of mass destruction, poverty, deadly epidemics and climate change. All those threats jeopardize human survival and undermine the stability and security of States.

Based on the report of the Secretary-General, the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) placed collective security at the heart of the interdependent triad of development, security and human rights. That triad reflects the intertwining of diverse threats whose assuredly indiscriminate effects are felt in all regions throughout the world. The equation is simple: address all those ills with equal effectiveness, without any discrimination, and deal with each threat in the same way as the others, because it has been well established that threats transcend borders and that their effects are universal.

One of those recurrent threats is, of course, the outbreak of intra- or inter-State conflicts, whose sporadic effects on stability in subregions, regions and even continents are immediate. How, then, can we put an end to conflicts that continue to break out? How can we prevent countries emerging from conflicts from relapsing into them?

The participants in the 2005 World Summit provided an innovative answer when they decided to establish the Peacebuilding Commission, thus filling a fundamental gap in the institutional structure of the United Nations in order to help countries make a successful transition from war to lasting peace. Since the Commission's establishment, its work has proved arduous and requires the mobilization of increased resources in order to assist in the implementation of integrated peacebuilding strategies. In other words, the commitment of partners, regional and international institutions, donors and countries that are in a position to do so must be systematic, constant and concrete.

However, all our peacebuilding efforts would not be complete without effective control of the illicit trade in weapons, which continue to circulate and jeopardize peace processes. How can we aspire to peace, given the excessive accumulation of weapons whose destructive effects continue to undermine all peacekeeping, peacebuilding and development efforts? How can we justify financing the weapons trade through mining, oil and other resources when they should finance the needs of populations?

In that regard, significant efforts and real political will must be deployed to achieve the consolidation and implementation of the existing legal instruments in this area and, if necessary, to establish new legal rules, in particular to regulate the transfer and brokering of conventional weapons in order to control their circulation.

But the danger of small arms and light weapons is not our only cause for concern. The existence of weapons of mass destruction is a perpetual high-risk threat that continues to hang over the future of the world. Undoubtedly, the universality of a treaty as important as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a cornerstone of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, serves the common objective of collective security. Collective security requires the renunciation of proliferation and a commitment to total and complete disarmament, without which the risk of the acquisition of such weapons by non-State actors is very plausible.

Indeed, collective security is a two-sided coin: one side is non-proliferation, and the other is disarmament. Our world deserves such security, and if we are to achieve it, both of those requirements must be met.

Article 26 of the United Nations Charter requires the Security Council to play a proactive role not only in peacekeeping itself, but also in promoting it by drawing up plans to be submitted to Members of the Organization with a view to establishing a system for the regulation of armaments. In the same spirit, in its resolution 41 (1) of 14 December 1946, the General Assembly also reaffirmed that obligation of the Council by recommending that the latter formulate practical measures for the regulation and reduction of armaments.

To date, the Security Council has taken no action in that regard, which to a certain extent has encouraged

States to increase their military spending, to the detriment of their development needs. It has also fostered major black markets in weapons in the absence of control and regulation. In 2006, a small group of States, including Morocco, concerned by the harmful effects of armed violence in poor countries affected by conflict, adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which identified a close correlation between those two antithetical notions whereby a reduction in armed violence fosters sustainable development.

The States that signed the Declaration are committed to stepping up their efforts to integrate the reduction of armed violence into their national, regional and international development strategies and their humanitarian assistance and crisis management initiatives. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the adoption by the General Assembly on 17 November of resolution 63/23 on promoting development through the reduction and prevention of armed violence.

Arms limitation is important, but not sufficient in and of itself. The key is human, economic and social development. The key is in the consolidation of States' cooperation and international assistance for development.

Human development must supersede armament. We must focus our action on that profitable market instead of on military expenditures, which some States have made their primary objective. Human development must allow us to emerge from poverty and destitution. It must have the human individual at its heart and strive for the full flourishing of human beings and their development. The quest for a better life is eternal and, as Aristotle said so well, every social organization must be evaluated on the basis of its contribution to humankind. That is precisely the philosophy underlying the human development initiative launched in 2005 by His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco.

The President (spoke in Spanish): I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): Canada wishes to thank President Arias and Costa Rica for bringing this important discussion to the Security Council. Canada applauds the initiative of Costa Rica to ensure that the Council exercises all Articles of the Charter at its disposal in the fulfilment of its mandated role in the

larger goal of maintaining international peace and security.

At a time when existing multilateral disarmament institutions appear unable to move forward on new multilateral arms control and disarmament treaties, Canada would welcome actionable proposals from the Council relating to Article 26, as proposed in Costa Rica's concept paper. A more proactive Security Council role would serve to strengthen our treaty-based multilateral agreements and bodies and help make them more relevant and robust.

Greater involvement and leadership by the Council on disarmament issues would be welcome and could be significant in helping to overcome serious challenges in the existing disarmament machinery. The decade-long deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament and the significant gaps in consensus within the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee — most notably on nuclear issues — speak to the need for the revitalization of our international efforts.

That said, leadership by the Council would also need to be accompanied by more constructive engagement by all countries. "A system for the regulation of armaments", as proposed in Article 26, would require buy-in by the world community as a whole. We would also note that any decision regarding renewed activity of the Military Staff Committee, after a prolonged period of disuse, would require significant consultation and further study.

Canada also supports the importance the concept paper ascribes to Member States' abiding by the treaties to which they are parties, as compliance is a critical element of any legally binding agreement. Increased transparency in military expenditures and arms transfers can also assist in building confidence measures between States and enhancing security.

(spoke in French)

Finally, Costa Rica's paper highlights the valuable and cost-effective role of regional organizations in promoting international peace and security. So, too, does Canada recognize the need for greater coordination and support in order for the many regional agreements to achieve greater effectiveness and realize potential synergies. Regular, comprehensive interaction between regional organizations and the Council would be beneficial in that regard.

In conclusion, Canada will follow with interest the outcome of today's open debate and appreciates this opportunity to contribute.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Sir, for organizing this timely debate on an important and topical subject. Armenia and the South Caucasus as a whole are facing a number of challenges stemming from the lack of regional security arrangements and a deficiency of existing arms control and regulation mechanisms.

The experience of the decades after the Second World War testifies that collective security arrangements are viable and can stand the test of time if they are based at the very least on consensus and a common perception of security threats. The European security architecture was established on the basis of the political realities of the cold-war era. Since that time, the geopolitical situation in the Euro-Atlantic area has undergone dramatic changes. New threats have emerged, and therefore some valid questions about the relevance and efficiency of pan-European security have arisen over the past two decades.

It was no accident that the idea to convene a summit to discuss the future of the European security system emerged during the discussions at the recent European Union-Russia high-level meeting. We concur with those who believe that, before convening such a summit and undertaking steps towards improving the existing security mechanisms, members of the Euro-Atlantic community should rather refrain from any radical actions that might complicate the current security environment.

Regrettably, the South Caucasus is a region where a number of unresolved conflicts still exist in the absence of regional security arrangements. In such circumstances, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe has been playing an instrumental role in the maintenance of peace and stability in the South Caucasus. However, in our region that pivotal agreement is being challenged. Over the past few years, the ceilings for conventional weapons established for the countries of our region have been violated by one State of the South Caucasus.

In addition, over the past few years we have witnessed a relentless arms race, along with the

unprecedented growth of military expenditures, in the countries of the South Caucasus. Those dangerous developments are taking place against the backdrop of belligerent rhetoric. The lack of trust among conflicting parties, coupled with the current absence of confidence-building measures, is threatening the overall security situation in the region. The recent events in Georgia were the grave consequences of such developments.

Thus, we strongly believe that before a comprehensive security arrangement is forged, the countries of the South Caucasus need to commit themselves to the non-use of force in the settlement of unresolved conflicts. In that context, the joint declaration on Nagorny Karabakh signed on 2 November in Moscow by the Presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia can play a promising role.

Having mentioned the necessity of a comprehensive security treaty for the region, I would like to point out the recent proposal on a Caucasus security platform made by the Prime Minister of Turkey. The initial reaction from the leaders of the State concerned was encouraging. We hope that countries of the region and other interested parties will be more consistent in ensuring that this proposal is not as futile as analogous proposals previously presented by regional and external actors have been.

In speaking about general regulation and control of arms, I would like to commend the initiative on an arms trade treaty introduced by the Government of the United Kingdom two years ago. The scope of support for the resolution on this issue (General Assembly resolution 61/89) brings hope for the establishment of an effective global regulatory mechanism for arms transfer.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Armenia's firm commitment to contributing to the efforts of strengthening present international mechanisms on arms control and global security as well as to participating constructively in future deliberations.

The President (spoke in Spanish): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Seruhere (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, Mr. President, let me congratulate you on having convened this meeting on the subject of strengthening collective security through general

regulation and reduction of armaments. The meeting could not have come at a better or more opportune moment: this is a time when a conventional arms build-up is taking place in some regions, including in some conflict areas in Africa. Your decision, Sir, is highly commendable.

As we speak, small arms and light weapons are playing havoc in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians who have escaped death have been displaced and are faced with imminent danger and a risk of war-related death from disease or hunger. The international humanitarian response leaves a lot to be desired.

Tanzania is committed, along with the African Union, to resolving the conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in collaboration with the United Nations. In that regard, we commend the efforts undertaken by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, the former President of Nigeria, General Olusegun Obasanjo. We encourage the Security Council to step up support for the Secretary-General's initiatives, including by approving the proposal that has been submitted on increasing the number of peacekeeping troops for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Through Security Council resolution 1653 (2006) of January 2006, Tanzania and the United Nations expressed concern and urged the disarmament of rebel groups and negative elements in the Great Lakes region. To date, armed conflict continues unabated; this conflict has its recent origins in the conflict of 1990s in the Great Lakes region of Africa and continues despite a series of meetings and agreements between the belligerents. Equally important, the Council called upon countries of the region to agree on confidence-building measures. Confidence-building measures are essential to conflict resolution, and ending conflicts will inevitably curtail the excess demand for weapons. In the Great Lakes region, that would mean a significant reduction in the circulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

We commend the efforts made by the United Nations in keeping the peace and maintaining security, insofar as the conflict has not spilled beyond the borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But together we can do a lot more by beefing up the peacekeeping force and enabling it to be more robust in

its rules of engagement. We must enable Governments in the region and the affected civilian population to have more confidence in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Conflict exacerbation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo is occasioned by the armament of rebels and negative elements, among other things. We need not point fingers at possible sources, but we should curtail inflows of arms and ammunition to the rebels and negative elements, in addition to addressing their concerns as the situation may demand. We urge the relevant arms monitoring committees of the Security Council to intensify oversight on arms trafficking in the region.

Besides negotiations to end conflict, it is important to have an international instrument on arms production and distribution that would limit that business to State actors. A combination of legal instruments, political will and disarmament tools and procedures, through the work of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, could go a long way in ensuring the regulation and reduction of armaments. In that regard, we call upon Member States and all people of goodwill to support United Nations endeavours to agree on a comprehensive arms trade treaty which will specifically address the menace of small arms and light weapons.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your successful presidency of the Security Council and on having chosen the theme of strengthening collective security through general regulation and reduction of armaments. We agree that this is among the factors that are conducive to peace and development.

Our understanding is that the Security Council's review of this theme today is based on its connection to threats to international peace and security, on the basis of Article 24 of the Charter, which explicitly sets out the mandate of the Security Council, and Article 26, which requires the agreement of the General Assembly on any proposal made by the Council concerning any approach relating to arms regulation. It is also based on United Nations system-wide coherence, taking into account the fact that United Nations bodies are mutually reinforcing and complementary, and

preserving the mandate of the multilateral disarmament machinery when dealing with any issue related to disarmament and international security.

Chapter VIII of the Charter sets out the importance of activating the role of regional and subregional organizations and of fostering cooperation between those organizations and the United Nations on issues related to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Building on that concept, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States and the African Union are examples of regional organizations that are active in legislating and implementing disarmament, in compliance with the United Nations approach in this field. This enables those organizations to successfully complement the role played by the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Accordingly, in the light of the principle of collective security, the United Nations has the responsibility to provide those organizations with the support they need to effectively play their role, especially in regions experiencing armed conflicts and visible and hidden flows of arms.

The world's annual expenditure on armament has reached nearly \$1 trillion. Considering the interrelationship among disarmament, security and development, it is easy to imagine what we could have done to achieve development goals if that amount of money had been invested in improving conditions of human life worldwide, and the amount of the Security Council's time and effort that could have been saved.

It would thus be useful if the Member States implemented the General Assembly's repeated resolutions on the relationship between disarmament and development, which emerge from the work of the First Committee. Such resolutions are adopted annually, by an overwhelming majority. They set out a practical approach to address new challenges facing the international community regarding development and the elimination of poverty and the pandemic diseases that afflict humanity, through a preventive approach based on the benefits gained from reallocating armament-oriented expenditures to the attainment of development goals.

Foreign occupation of the lands of other peoples is a serious threat to international peace and security, for it leads not only to chaos, economic destruction, flows of weapons and the depletion of the international

community's resources, but also, consequently, to the loss of development opportunities. In fact, the international financial crisis that the world is facing today is convincing evidence of that clear fact.

The State of Qatar believes that the commitment of Member States to implement the arms regulation and reduction agreements that they have undertaken is the basis for the success of these agreements and for bringing them to fruition. That would in turn bring about prosperity and development for all mankind.

Thus, it is worth recalling that measures to verify respect for those commitments are set out in the relevant agreements themselves, and are based on the consent of relevant States parties. In that regard, non-compliance with such agreements should not be used as a pretext for unilateral action or for employing means beyond the scope of multilateralism and international legitimacy. Otherwise, the international community would lose the benefits of its pre-eminent agreement: the Charter of the United Nations, which should be preserved and abided by in order to achieve security, peace and development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bolivia.

Mr. Siles Alvarado (Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like at the outset to thank and commend the delegation of Costa Rica for having organized an event of such importance, especially for small countries, such as Costa Rica, which has set an undeniable example of following a pacifist policy — an example worthy of emulation. Bolivia too has begun a process where we are giving very clear signals that the only path guaranteeing international peace and security is precisely that of dialogue and of commitment to a culture of peace.

Bolivia, like few other countries in the world, has gone through periods of great violence and great aggression. From 1810 to 1825, we experienced 15 years of armed struggle against the Spanish Crown, and much blood was shed. Afterwards, during the period of the Republic, Bolivia was the victim of wars of aggression. As a result of these, just as it was coming to life as a republic, it lost more than 1.2 million square kilometres — more than half — of its territory, falling victim to aggression by some neighbouring countries, and victim to the terror and violence of dictatorial military Governments under the

umbrella of the cold war and, moreover, sponsored by one of the most powerful countries in the region.

This period of violence has not ended. Barely two months ago, we experienced a massacre, we hope the last, caused by the opposition to the Government of President Evo Morales, an opposition which feels hatred and racism against those peoples that have always been marginalized in Bolivian society. This hatred and racism gave rise to a massacre against defenceless farmers, which was condemned by practically all countries in the world — except the most powerful country in the region.

Convinced that the path to international peace is based on dialogue, which itself is based on disarmament, not only physical disarmament, but also spiritual, Bolivia is about to adopt a new political constitution, whose article 10 States that:

"Bolivia is a pacifist State which promotes the culture of peace and the right to peace, as well as cooperation among the peoples of the region and the world in order to contribute to mutual understanding, equitable development and the promotion of interculturalism, with full respect for the sovereignty of States. Bolivia rejects all wars of aggression as a means of settling differences and conflicts among States and reserves the right to legitimate self-defence in the case of aggression which threatens the independence or integrity of the State.

"The installation of foreign military bases on Bolivian territory is prohibited."

Article 10, clearly, expresses Bolivia's will to begin a new era of building true peace in the world.

In the course of this debate, we have heard very encouraging statements, such as that of the United Kingdom, which clearly expressed the position that in order to move forward in the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, we also have to emphasize the process of disarmament of those countries that possess nuclear weapons. My delegation would like to hear that same statement and we would like to see that same decision among those States whose possession of nuclear weapons is the real threat to international peace and security. It is not true that in recent years the greatest danger to peace has been something that is local, limited to internal conflicts. It is not simply the

internal conflicts of every country that could possibly threaten global peace.

Let us not forget the international conflicts — the acts of war in Afghanistan and in Iraq. We will not ask whether the reasons were good or bad, as for us, all wars are bad. Furthermore, just a few days ago we heard statements from a State official who suggested that the war in Iraq should continue — and this was in inverted commas — because he had just signed a major arms contract with the country on whose behalf he was speaking.

There has been a great deal said about the illicit arms trade, but I wonder whether the licit arms trade would be less deadly than the illicit arms trade. We all aim to tighten the ban on the trafficking of illegal weapons. We all agree that we have to combat arms trafficking, but we also have to remember that many of the armed conflicts are the result of the stinginess of those countries that promote war and the industry of war. Why does the United Nations not take the initiative to generate a project that would make it possible to systematically ban arms production? Arms are the true cause of conflicts.

My country has experienced two wars that were caused, not by hatred or conflict between brothers or with neighbouring countries, but rather by the interests of transnational firms, which organized and planned the armed conflicts.

Lastly, even though there are many topics that I would like to mention here, I simply want to conclude by mentioning the need to analyze the consequences of encouraging the arms race in regions where we have less developed countries, countries with the greatest needs. Many of these countries feel threatened by the belligerent discourse of their neighbours, because the neighbours receive contributions of millions and millions (of dollars) worth of armaments, and because their neighbours receive loans as well in order to arm themselves. Of course, this forces every country to naturally feel the need to find a mechanism with which to defend itself, even at the cost of hunger for its people.

I believe that, in the final analysis, the United Nations must take measures that would be aimed at eliminating this scandalous supply of arms.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, my delegation thanks you for organizing today's public meeting. We greatly appreciate the presence here of the President of Costa Rica and his personal contribution, which considerably raises the tone of this important public event taking place during the term of office of Costa Rica in the presidency of the Security Council.

The topic is of importance in order to achieve the major objectives of the United Nations. Nothing distinguishes the United Nations Charter as much as the explicit link established between peace, international security, development and the promotion of respect for individual rights and fundamental freedoms. This relationship is reflected quite clearly in Article 26 of the Charter.

Benin recalled the appeal made in Article 26 of the Charter in our statement made during the general debate of the sixty-third session in the First Committee, where we expressed our grave concern over the considerable increase in military expenditures among Member States. The topic of our discussion today, then, puts at the forefront of the Security Council's agenda this crucial function granted to it by the Charter, which it has not been able to carry out because of unfavourable circumstances accompanying its development since the entry into force of the Charter.

The Security Council's inaction in the area of arms regulation and reduction is linked to the development of nuclear weapons and their proliferation in the context of the cold war. Regional conflicts, which increased during that period, are also part of the framework of that major confrontation. At the end of the cold war, the entire world had cherished the hope of reaping the real dividends of peace by beginning strategic cooperation among the major Powers in order to face the challenges to humankind at the beginning of the third millennium. If the bilateral disarmament agreements in nuclear weapons concluded in the 1990s made such hopes credible, the current situation is one of grave concern. We see an increase of 45 per cent in military expenditures in the same period, with real or supposed proliferation risks generated by the deadlock in which the disarmament machinery administered by the General Assembly finds itself. This has happened because the Security Council has played only a marginal role in the regulation and reduction of armaments called for in Article 26. We can no longer

let this situation, which is totally unacceptable, further frustrate the expectations of humankind.

By opening a public debate on the strengthening of collective security through a general regulation and reduction of armaments as the safest way to peace and development, your country, Mr. President, has begun an undertaking of crucial importance. We hope that the Security Council will seize this new opportunity to resume leadership in efforts to stem the arms race throughout the world. If it is able to do so, it will create conditions favourable for a realization of the promise of peace, of security, of development and of the promotion of respect for basic human rights, as contained in the Millennium Declaration adopted at the 2000 Millennium Summit and in the Final Document of the 2005 World Summit of the United Nations General Assembly.

My delegation therefore fully agrees with the analysis proposed in the concept paper (S/2008/697, annex) drawn up by your country, Sir, to guide our thoughts on this topic. We endorse the major ideas put forth in paragraphs 10 to 20 of that document for tackling the challenges described in it.

The Security Council must implement those ideas in a meaningful manner by working relentlessly to make the collective security system established by the Charter fully operational in all its dimensions. It should endeavour to regain control over the unacceptable distortions plaguing international peace and security by fully shouldering its responsibilities, with strict respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, whether large or small. The Security Council should become a major inspiration for multilateralism, consistently making use of its universal competencies and the regional coordination required for their effective exercise.

In this regard, Benin would like to draw the attention of the Security Council to the very interesting study by Professor Paul Collier of Oxford University on regional coordination for the reduction of military expenditures. The peacekeeping and conflict prevention mechanisms established in various parts of the world should be designed to build the architecture of the collective security system envisaged in Chapter VIII of the Charter.

The African Union has achieved considerable progress in this area and has repeatedly expressed its desire that the Security Council and the United Nations

express their appreciation for its efforts, in part by financing peacekeeping operations conducted under the mandate of the Council. It is important to promote in this regard effective cooperation among States in order to ensure international peace and security at less cost. In this regard, Benin welcomes the operational guidelines contained in resolutions 1625 (2005), 1631 (2005) and 1809 (2008), which are rightly recalled in your letter, Sir, on today's debate.

At the same time, the Security Council should mobilize the international community to meaningful action to eliminate the root causes of conflict, through developing the interdependence of States, their internal relations and the relationship between man and nature. The major challenges that this involves prove the total inconsistency of the arms race. In order to face those challenges, the reform under way in the international system should be aimed resolutely towards evolving a new logic that embodies in the best possible way the major principles of the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Benmechidi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all to welcome the presence of His Excellency President Óscar Arias Sánchez at this debate. I would like to congratulate his delegation on their accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November. I would also like to thank the delegation of Costa Rica for this praiseworthy initiative of organizing an open debate on such an important topic.

The year 2008 marks the 30th anniversary of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which was a historic turning point in multilateral efforts for general disarmament and in the role of the General Assembly in particular. The outcome document of that session served as a guide for the efforts of the Organization in that area.

That awakening of the international community brought about a climate of détente and cooperation that promised better prospects for dialogue and consultation on the subject of disarmament. We saw a qualitative change in attitudes, which allowed for more flexible positions and the undertaking of initiatives that had long been held up by narrow-minded power struggles.

Today, we are forced to acknowledge that the hope prompted by those efforts to free humankind from

the threat of weapons of mass destruction has dwindled. As a result, many questions have arisen, as the risks related to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the development of a new generation of arms have never been greater. That situation is obviously highlighted by the emergence of new and pressing threats that are of great concern for the entire international community.

Given the situation, the preservation of international peace and security and the resolution of conflicts, in particular conflicts that are related to decolonization, represent a common challenge for the entire international community. We have to tackle this task in order to establish together the conditions necessary for a thorough change in attitudes and to lay the foundations of the collective security system that we all aspire to and that is the safest path to peace and development.

Such a challenge, in our opinion, requires a commitment to the promotion of the rule of law and the rehabilitation of a multilateral negotiating framework in order to provide global and sustainable solutions to questions of disarmament and non-proliferation. Such efforts depend on the implementation of commitments that we have all undertaken together in the area of disarmament and the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction, which is the only real guarantee of security for all.

Algeria is resolutely committed to fulfilling all its obligations stemming from the regional and international instruments to which it is a party. We will spare no effort, within the framework of the regional and multilateral entities to which we belong, to support and promote initiatives designed to relaunch the process of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

In this respect, my delegation shares the concerns of many delegations, notably African delegations, regarding the risks presented by proliferation and the illicit trafficking of light weapons, the destabilizing effects of which seriously undermine international peace and stability and development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to commend the laudable initiative of Costa Rica to highlight the importance of disarmament and development at this

Security Council debate under the leadership of Nobel laureate President Óscar Arias Sánchez. Costa Rica is well known as a country with no standing army and is, therefore, best positioned to take up such an initiative.

Strengthening multilateralism and collective security is very close to the heart of our people in Japan. Under its Constitution, Japan has renounced the use of force as a means of settling international conflicts and has followed faithfully the path of peace and development through international cooperation. Japan has spared no effort to mobilize resources for the peace and prosperity of its population domestically and of the world in the international arena. Japan is a determined advocate for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disarmament.

Disarmament is one of the top priorities of Japan's foreign policy. We are leading international efforts for nuclear disarmament and the control of conventional arms. We have adopted three non-nuclear principles and a strict policy of non-export of weapons. On the basis of its strong conviction that it is necessary to create a world without nuclear weapons, Japan has initiated the resolution on nuclear disarmament at the General Assembly every year since 1994 and has actively promoted the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In the area of small arms and light weapons, Japan has played a leading role in implementing the Programme of Action since its adoption in 2001. Furthermore, Japan, together with Colombia and South Africa, has initiated General Assembly resolutions on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

It is our strong belief that peace dividends realized from disarmament efforts will enhance the economic and social development of populations at large and, by easing tensions, have a beneficial effect on a society as well as on its neighbouring countries. Needless to say, peace and security are not automatically given to us; we have to work for them. Constant efforts and a significant amount of resources must be brought together to achieve and sustain them. That is why we need to unite our strength and wisdom to maintain international peace and security and to work to practice tolerance in order to live with one another in peace as good neighbours.

The importance of the control and disarmament of conventional weapons is most acutely felt in post-conflict situations. After a ceasefire agreement is

reached, military expenditures often increase rather than go down. Over the course of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, our endeavours need to focus on regulating arms and disarmament in order to achieve a safer and more stable society. The Peacebuilding Commission is uniquely placed to fill gaps and work as a catalyst to marshal resources to bring about peace and development, thereby charting a new horizon for collective security.

For a conflict-torn society to be restored to a normal life and the vicious cycle of conflict and poverty to come to an end, that society needs to produce tangible changes in the everyday livelihood of the people. For instance, electricity supply should be brought to every household, and farmland should be cleared of landmines and employment generated for ex-combatants. The aspiration to social stability and durable peace will then become dominant, and people will eventually beat their swords into ploughshares.

Peacebuilding efforts are multifaceted; security sector reform, economic development and the strengthening of governance have to be tackled concurrently. National ownership and self-help are not only a norm, but an irreplaceable key to success. After peace is restored, State-building and reconciliation need to replace intolerance and hatred. The deepening of trust, mutual respect and interdependence among neighbours will prevent a relapse into violent conflict. All disputes should be settled by peaceful and democratic means.

Regional cooperation in this respect is indispensable. As many conflicts today are characterized as revolving cross-border conflicts, conflict resolution will be partial and incomplete unless it addresses the regional dimension of a conflict and the control of illicit weapons. The control of small arms and light weapons is particularly important, since the proliferation of such weapons prolongs deadly conflicts and has an adverse impact on social stability and long-term development.

The Security Council can cooperate closely with regional organizations, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and others, and work for peace and security, through which a decline in military spending can result. For instance, we supported, through ECOWAS, the establishment of national commissions to tackle the illicit proliferation of small arms and light

weapons in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. We also welcome the contributions of the United Nations regional disarmament centres to promoting the regional approach. Japan will continue to support regional and subregional efforts to implement the Programme of Action on small arms, in cooperation with the United Nations.

The world is faced with a myriad of challenges that need to be addressed in order to maintain peace and promote prosperity. We are determined to contribute to collective security through Security Council membership starting next year and to continue to devote ourselves fully to maintaining international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Security Council:

"The Security Council recalls its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

"The Security Council remains convinced of the necessity to strengthen international peace and security through, *inter alia*, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It considers that the regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces, as appropriate, constitute one of the most important measures to promote international peace and security with the least diversion of the world's human and economic resources.

"The Security Council notes the importance of collective security and its impact on disarmament and development, and stresses its concern at increasing global military expenditure.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of appropriate levels of military expenditure, in order to achieve undiminished security for all at the lowest appropriate level of armaments. It urges all States to devote as many resources as possible to economic and social development, in particular in the fight against poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

"The Security Council affirms the 2005 World Summit Outcome in which heads of State and Government recognized that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

"The Security Council stresses the vital importance of an effective multilateral system to better address, in accordance with international law, the multifaceted and interconnected challenges and threats confronting our world and to achieve progress in the areas of peace and security, development and human rights, which are the pillars of the United Nations system and the foundations for collective security and well-being. It also expresses its support for multilateralism as one of the most important means for resolving security concerns in accordance with international law.

"The Security Council expresses support for national, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures adopted by Governments aimed at reducing military expenditures, where appropriate, thereby contributing to strengthening regional and international peace and security.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of promoting norm-setting in accordance with international law as part of the efforts to strengthen non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control measures, as well as the importance of compliance with and reinforcing of the existing agreements, conventions and treaties which relate to these matters and international peace and security.

"The Security Council reiterates that cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in matters relating to the maintenance of peace and security and consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations can improve collective security and therefore should be continuously strengthened. In this regard, it underlines the importance of strengthening the capacity of such organizations

in conflict prevention, crisis management, armaments control and in supporting States recovering from conflict and laying the foundation for sustainable peace and development.

"The Security Council recalls the obligation of all States to accept and carry out its decisions in accordance with Article 25 of the United Nations Charter and affirms its commitment to continue monitoring and promoting the effective implementation of its decisions in order to avoid conflict, promote and maintain international peace and security and further confidence in collective security.

"The Security Council calls on Member States, regional and subregional organizations, the Secretariat and the competent United Nations Funds and Programmes, as appropriate, to make further efforts to preserve, facilitate, develop and strengthen international and regional cooperation in the areas of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, through, inter alia, further implementation, development and strengthening of relevant agreements and instruments.

"The Security Council intends to continue following this issue."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/43.

I should like to thank all participants for their contributions to this meeting. I would especially like to thank His Excellency Mr. Samuel Lewis-Navarro, Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama, and His Excellency Mr. Renan Fuentealba, Special Envoy of the President of Chile, as well as other representatives.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.